



COMIX WORLD 103. September 1, 1978. Copyright Clay Geerdes, Box 7081, Berkeley, CA 94707. World Rights Reserved. Logo and photo of Joel Milke, Clay Geerdes, and Tim Boxell © Doug Bryson. Other photos on this page © Clay Geerdes and they may not be reproduced without permission. The bottom line (left to right): Joel Milke, Clay, Tim, Mark Bode (his first con appearance--Bay Con '78), Jim Steranko, Carol, Ron Turner, and Ms. X who was signed by many artists at San Diego Con.



Lee Marrs

Steranko is looking at Jaxon's BLOOD ON THE MOON, the final book in his Indian trilogy. That title was previously used by Luke Short on a novel and later filmed with Robert Mitchum in the lead.* The Fabulous Furry Freak Brothers and their infamous orange kitty-kat are ten years old and Rip Off Press threw a nice party to celebrate the occasion. Two nice cakes showed up, both with the cat on them, one from the Berkeley BARB, the other done by Lora Fountain. Live music was provided by Automatic Slim. On hand were cover sheets from ZIPPY STORIES 2 and FAT FREDDY'S CAT 4. A lot of books are being held up right now because of a paper strike, so lots of comic stores have run out of FREAK BROTHERS. Ugs always sell well during the tourist season out here, because they are unavailable in many parts of the country. Near the ice tub, Spain and Ted Richards talking



Spain



S. Clay Wilson



Wendy Pini, Trina, Frank Thorne

about Marvel's Conan. Spain did a poster which showed the reality of those gory times a few years ago. Ted says, "They're drawing muscles on him that don't even exist. He oughta be lean." Watch out for ANARCHY COMIX. Among the artists on that one: Jay Kinney and Melinda Gebbie. Looks like Rip Off Press has proved you can sell an \$8 funnybook. The color Freak Brothers sold enough copies the first week to pay all printing costs.* A great underground art show coming together for the Berkeley Comic Art Fair, September 23, 1978, at Ashkenaz, 1317 San Pablo, Berkeley. You'll see art by Spain, Trina, Melinda Gebbie, S. Clay Wilson, Ted Richards (Mellow Cat), Gilbert Shelton, David Sheridan, and many other folks. Rip Off Press, Last Gasp, Star*Reach, Comics and Comix, and many other companies will be on hand to deal and look at artwork. Plan to come up for the weekend. Admission to the Fair is only \$1.50. Information from Ashkenaz, 415-525-5054. Call between 10 and 2 daily. SASE to Comix World gets you other information.

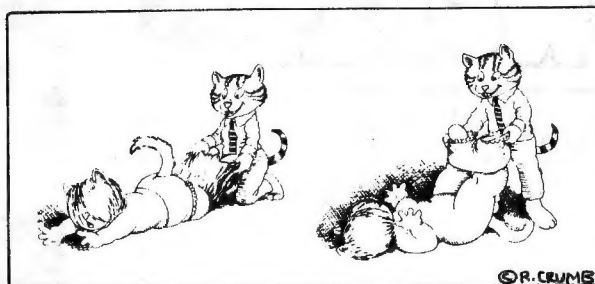


THE EVOLUTION OF FRITZ THE CAT®

When I was a kid we had this cat named Fred. He was your typical big old nasty dirty tomcat. I used to draw comic strips about him to entertain my little brother and sister. At first I did stories about him as a real cat, walking on all fours and living in the real world of cats and dogs, back alleys, and battles with other cats over territory. These were just simple pencil cartoon strips drawn in composition note-books. I was always drawing cartoons as a teen-ager as a way of avoiding coping with the world. My brother Charles and I did alot of "two-man" comics all through our teen years, in the late 'Fifties and early 'Sixties. Fred became one of the characters in our 'Pogo'-esque animal two-mans. Charles' characters began calling Fred "Fritz". So then his name became Fritz. His personality gradually developed. I started doing long solo stories with Fritz as the star character.

(From INTRODUCTION. © R. CRUMB, 1978.)

Have you noticed that no dog has ever made it big in the Undergrounds? Lots of cats from Kim Deitch's Waldo and Jay Lynch's Pat to Fat Freddy's Cat and Fritz, but no dogs. I asked Shelton one time why he picked a cat and he said, "well, there just always seemed to be a lot of cats around." Crumb's Fred, of course, evolved into the infamous and ill-fated Fritz the Cat, one of the only ug characters ever to be satirized by the National Lampoon. THE COMPLETE FRITZ THE CAT is an excellent study of the development of a character and reading the entire work one cannot help but be impressed with Crumb's mastery. The early story of Fred, reprinted from one of Crumb's notebook comics, shows the presence of many techniques of story-telling and characterization Crumb was to perfect in the late sixties in HEAD COMIX and ZAP. What Crumb realized when he graduated to a rapidograph was the ability of that little weapon to communicate a wider variety of facial expressions than a regular pen. Fritz had his decade and Crumb used Andrea Ostrich to kill him off after the Bakshi fiasco, but what one feels now is mainly how well Crumb succeeded in incorporating all of the themes of the sixties into his work without ever being boring or pedantic. The balance between words and pictures is exquisite. Crumb characters never say anything when their facial and body language have already made their meaning clear. For those whose only exposure to the character has been via the Bakshi films, this book should be an eye-opener.* The spiffy-looking dog in the straw hat below has to be J. Michael Leonard (author of the forthcoming book STAR WEEVILS) and next to him his recent bride, Suzanne Perada. It appears that monogamy and marriage are coming back into style.



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Well, in the 1940s, they were hepcats and in the 50s the Beats shortened that to cats, then along came the 1960s and 'Mellow yellow' & now we have the 70s and Ted Richards' Mellow Cat. Come and see some of the original art in the show at the Fair in September. Below, that's now Alfred E. Neuman, but the photo of the kid the artist used as a model. Goes back to 1890-something. C.G.



Herman "Red" Toddlepopp,
of Toddlepopp, Toddlepopp
and Toddlepopp.

FROM HULLABALOO
April, 1932.



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